



Controlling inflation, provision of employment opportunities govt's top priorities: Masadik Malik

Minister for Petroleum Division Dr Masadik Masood Malik on Saturday said that controlling inflation and providing employment opportunities to the people were the government's top priorities. Addressing a press conference here, he said on the directives of the prime minister... (Details on Page 8)



T20 World Cup 2024: US envoy hopes Pakistan will have 'an unforgettable tournament'

US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome conveyed his best wishes to the Pakistan cricket team, wishing them an unforgettable tournament ahead of the Twenty20 (T20) World Cup 2024 set to commence today. "On behalf of the US mission in Pakistan, I extend my warmest wishes to captain Babar Azam and his team for an unforgettable tournament," Ambassador Blome said.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Promotion

RAWALPINDI: Helen Mary Roberts first Christian woman officer promoted as Brigadier in Pakistan Army.



Photo: File

Pakistan Army promotes first Christian female officer to brigadier

Helen Mary Roberts has proven Pakistani women can excel in any field, says PM Shehbaz

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In a first, Pakistan's army has promoted the first Christian female officer to the rank of brigadier. "She is the first female officer from a minority community to achieve this rank," the news outlet reported while quoting the Inter-Services Public Relations on Saturday.

Brig Helen Mary Roberts is affiliated with the Army Medical Corps and has made history as the first female army officer from a minority to reach such a rank. She joins the illustrious list of army officers from her community who have served their motherland in similar or higher capacities. Pakistani Christians have made significant contributions to the armed forces, with one of them

being Second Lt Daniel Utarid Shaheed who led his men to the front in the 1971 war. In reaction to the historic development, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif congratulated Helen Mary Roberts on her promotion. "Brigadier Roberts, a member of the Pakistani Christian community, has made history by becoming the first woman from a minority background to achieve this prestigious rank," the Associated Press of Pakistan reported while quoting the prime minister's statement. He said the entire nation including himself extended felicitation to her. The prime minister praised Brigadier Roberts for her hard work and dedication, saying that she had "proven that Pakistani women could excel in any field and were second to none." The entire nation was "proud of

Brigadier Roberts and the thousands of hardworking women like her from minority communities" who were serving the country with distinction. PM Shehbaz added that Brigadier Roberts' commitment to service, humanity, and her dedication to her work would serve as a "beacon of inspiration for the young women of the next generation."

activities are commendable," the prime minister added.

PM commends Pakistan Navy for successful anti-narcotics operation

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday applauded Pakistan Navy for successful operation in thwarting an attempt to smuggle 380 kilograms of narcotics in North Arabia Sea. In a statement, the prime minister appreciated the officers and personnel deputed at PNS Yarmook for foiling an attempt to smuggle 380 kilograms of narcotics. "The efforts of the Pakistan Navy officials in safeguarding the Pakistan's maritime boundaries and preventing illegal



activities are commendable," the prime minister added.

FIA summons Gohar, Omar, Hasan over 'anti-state social media post'

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency has summoned PTI Chairman Gohar Khan, Secretary General Omar Ayub, and party spokesperson Raouf Hasan next week over the "anti-state social media post" by former prime minister Imran Khan's account earlier this week. In separate notices to the three leaders, the FIA has asked them to appear in person FIA Cybercrime Reporting Centre Sub-Inspector Muhammad Monib Zafar.



"An enquiry has been initiated regarding misuse of verified X [Twitter] account of Mr. Imran Khan, Founder PTI through which highly obnoxious and inciting content against state institutions is shared which is likely to cause fear or alarm in the public and may induce/provoke anyone to commit an offence against the state or the state institution or public tranquility," said the allegation's gist. The case is related to a May 26 post on Khan's account in which he shared a video and urged people to study the Hamoodur Rahman Commission report. The video showed former Bangladesh president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. In reaction, the FIA Cyber Crime Wing launched an investigation into the controversial post sought permis-

sion from the judicial magistrate to interrogate the Adiala Jail inmate for sharing "anti-state activities" and "anti-state narratives" on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter. The institution has claimed the content was allegedly shared from Khan's profile. Khan is serving out his sentences in the cypher and the iddat cases at the Punjab's jail. On Thursday, he appeared through a video link in the National Accountability Bureau law amendment case. According to the plea, Khan allegedly built a false narrative and spread misinformation against state institutions of Pakistan, including the army, through his X account having more than 20 million followers. The wing contended that the video was "misleading, intimidating, and amounts to inciting an officer/soldier of armed forces of Pakistan to mutiny." It alleged that the post was purportedly a mischievous act of subversion within the various ranks of the armed forces of Pakistan and created a rift among the pillars of the state.

NEPRA determines quarterly tariff adjustment for 3rd quarter: Awaiz



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Division Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Lehari has said that today National Electric Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) determined quarterly tariff adjustment for third quarter of the current fiscal year which would be applicable in billing months of June, July and August. The adjustment for June would be Rs 1.90 per unit which would further decrease to 93 paise for July and August. (Continued on Page 8)

Federal minister calls for minority judges in higher judiciary

News Desk

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Law, Justice and Human Rights Senator Azam Nazir Tarar has expressed his aspiration for judges from minority communities to join Pakistan's higher judiciary. Speaking at the Justice A. R. Cornelius Conference held at a local hotel on Saturday, he emphasized the importance of religious freedom and minority rights in Pakistan. The event was organized by the Bright Future Society and Implementation Minority Rights Forum Pakistan. He highlighted that Pakistan's Constitution guarantees complete religious freedom, aligning with Islamic teachings on the rights of minorities. He lamented the decline in religious tolerance post-Afghan war but reiterated Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision of a united, tolerant society. He mentioned ongoing efforts to establish a Minority Rights Commission and proposed reserving quotas for



minority law officers and legal advisors. He praised retired Justice Tassaduq Hussain Jilani for his landmark decisions benefiting minorities, and lauded Justice Cornelius for his legacy of equal justice. Supreme Court Justice Mansoor Ali Shah echoed Tarar's sentiments, noting the Constitution's protection of minority rights and advocating for the appointment of minority judges to the higher judiciary. Speakers at the conference, including senior judges and legal experts,

paid tribute to Justice Cornelius and discussed the constitutional protections for minorities. They highlighted Justice Cornelius' impactful career and the 2014 Supreme Court guidelines under Justice Jilani aimed at safeguarding minority rights. The conference concluded with the distribution of certificates to distinguished guests, attended by prominent figures including Supreme Court Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Dr. Syed Muhammad Anwar, Justice Ali Baqar Najafi, and retired Justice Tassaduq Hussain Jilani, among others. (Continued on Page 8)

Parliament determined to safeguard rights of journalists: NA Speaker

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has said that the parliament is determined to spearhead the legislation for protecting reporters and journalists, especially the ones attached to print media. In a felicitation message to the newly elected members of the Council of Pakistan Newspapers Editors (CPNE), he congratulated Arshad Ahmed Arif and Ijaz-ul-Haq on their successful election as President and Secretary General of CPNE, respectively. He expressed confidence that the newly elected members will carry out every possible effort in protecting the rights of journalists. (Continued on Page 8)

ATC orders medical examination of Kashmiri poet

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: An anti-terrorism court in Muzaffarabad ordered on Saturday a medical examination of Kashmiri poet Ahmad Farhad on the request filed on the

suspicion of slow poisoning. At the hearing, his wife requested the court to change the lawyer. In the application, Farhad's wife Urooj Zainab stated that senior lawyers Sardar KD Khan

and Mahmood Baig should be appointed as her husband's lawyers. The court accepted the request for a change of lawyer. Lawyer Sardar KD Khan filed a new application in the court, stating that he met Farhad last

night, but his "condition was not good." The application alleged that his client was being given slow poison. After the lawyer's request, the ATC in Muzaffarabad ordered a medical examination of Farhad.

As per the court's order, a team of doctors from the Abbas Institute of Medical Sciences would conduct the medical examination of the Kashmiri poet. The case has been adjourned until June 3.

KP governor appreciates people for always standing with Pakistan's security force

Bureau report

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi appreciated people's vision on Saturday and termed it exemplary who always stand by and salute the courage and bravery of the security forces. He expressed these remarks while addressing people at Wagah border crossing. He admired the fascinating scene of love and devotion of the country people here, who completely showed their love to motherland, dedication to the guards of the country's borders, adding our people's vision is exemplary who always salute the courage and bravery of the security forces, Sector Commander Rangers Brigadier Ashfaq welcomed

the KP governor on his arrival at Wagah border. According to a spokesperson for the Governor's House, Kundi participated in the prestigious ceremony of lowering the flag on the Wagah border. He appreciated the enthusiasm of the Pakistan Rangers and the people participating in the ceremony. At the end of the ceremony, the KP governor was also briefed about border limits, security issues as per international laws. He also recorded his comments in the visitor's book at the Wagah border and also inspected the museum set there containing the culture of the four provinces of Pakistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir. He said that on the Wagah border, one could see (Continued on Page 8)

Bishop Yousuf stresses inter-religious harmony in order to bring about lasting peace

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Chairman of Catholic Commission for Inter-religious and Inter-Church Dialogue of Pakistan, Bishop Yousuf Sohan, visited the historical Sikh Gurdwara Panjab Sahib at Hasan Abdal and met with the Head Granthi, giving a message of inter-religious harmony and said that for lasting peace in the society. People of all religions need to make joint efforts for the establishment. Scholars of all religions living in Pakistan are struggling hard for social and religious harmony. and join in each other's happiness and increase the happiness. This is the teaching that we find in the heavenly holy books. Now



the time has come for us to come out of extremism and come towards pacifism and make our country a place of peace. Rev. Father Daniel Taj Multan Diocese, Rev. Father Shehzad Khokhar Hyderabad Diocese, Rev. Father Azam Siddique Islamabad Diocese, Samuel Clement National Executive Secretary, Kashif Gul Coordinator, Ex-MP Ravi Kumar, Sardar Santok Singh, Sardar Kalyan Singh made the cradle on this occasion., Sardar Babaji Gopal Singh, Sardar Anderjit Singh, Sardar Kalbir Singh, Sardar Gulcharan Singh, Sardar Sarwant Singh, Ismatullah Khan and others participated on this occasion. Christ, Hindus and Sikhs will have to unite so that we all struggle to make our country a cradle of peace.

Group photo

LAHORE: A group photo of Chairman Iqbal Garden, Malik Javed Dastgir, Sheikh Khalid Nazir, MD, M. Abdullah, Executive Director, and Chief Commercial Ok Officer, Asghar Waseem, during the Land Star Property Exhibition



Inspector General of Prisons(Jail) KPK Usman Mehsud visited District Jail Mansehra

Nasir Ali Tanoli

MANSEHRA: Inspector General of Prisons (Jail) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Usman Mehsud visited District Jail Mansehra, Superintendent Najam Hussain Abbasi made him inspect various projects in the jail and gave certificates and cash rewards to the officers and officials. Economic Development Inaugurated Prisoners of Mansehra Jail.

Inspector General of Prisons Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Usman Mehsud visited the District Jail Mansehra on this occasion the Jail Police gave him a salute, after which Superintendent Jail Najam Hussain Abbasi and his team gave him a warm welcome and informed about the ongoing development works inside the jail while the IG Prisons Usman Mehsud inaugurated the newly constructed display center and program for intellectual and economic development of prisoners of Mansehra Jail in the district



jail Mansehra. where Superintendent Jail Najam Hussain Abbasi Deputy Superintendent Rashid Khan Assistant Superintendent Usman Khan and other officers briefed him about the various items, after which IG Usman Mehsud made a detailed inspection of all the

barracks and women sections, cook house, hospital, industrial unit and other parts of the jail and met the prisoners. At the same time, IG Usman Mehsud gave certificates of computer, plumbing and electrical to 06 inmates who passed Toyota, while 06 female inmates also received certificates for completing the beautician course.

HDO Project Manager Sadaqat Khan and Muhammad Ahsan participated on this occasion, with the support of which work has been started on Beds Craft Work in Mansehra Jail, in which 20 inmates and prisoners are making models of various types of decorations.. At this point

Manager D. Watson Store Mansehra Mohammad Ijaz also assured full support for the purchase of bulbs.

In the end, IG Usman Mehsud awarded the staff of Mansehra Jail with certificates and cash prizes for their excellent performance. Strict security arrangements were made on this occasion.

A delegation of the Executive Committee of the High Court Bar Association Multan met with Chief Justice of Pakistan

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: A delegation of the Executive Committee of the High Court Bar Association Multan, led by President Bar Malik Sajjad Haider Maitla, Advocate Supreme Court, met the Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Qazi Faiz Essa. The delegation included General Secretary Syed Anees Mehdi, Vice President Ali Raza Alvi, Finance Secretary Qazi Waseem Abbas, Library Secretary Sardar Muhammad Rafiq Dogar and members Executive Muhammad Abdullah Chaudhry, Malik Liaqat Ali Soro, Shamsul Haque Khan, Shahbaz Ali Khan Gurmani,



Afzal Khan Chandia, Yasir Kaleem, Khalilur Rehman Mayo, Chaudhry Muhammad Manzoor, Abdul Salim Chaudhry, Nader Sultan Mura-

li, Zohaib Hasan, Muniba Anam, Chaudhry Dildar Barula and Asia Khan Malizai were participants. High Court Bar Multan President Malik Sajjad Haider Maitla Advocate invited the Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Qazi Faiz Essa to visit the High Court Bar Multan. But the appointment of judges should be ensured and requested that Multan and South Punjab must be represented in the appointment of judges so that people can get justice as soon as possible. She wants to hold a law conference under the chairmanship, so time should be given to participate in it.

The Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Qazi Faiz Essa assured the delegation that he would consider their demands sympathetically and would not disappoint them

People fear cancer because of 'fear of dying': Professor Ijaz Masood

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Professor (Rtd) of Cancer Ward Nishtar Hospital Dr. Ahmad Ijaz Masood has said that people get scared as soon as they hear the word cancer. While diseases like diabetes and blood pressure are also life-threatening which have fatal consequences. 100% is a curable disease, it is only a fear. With timely diagnosis and treatment, cancer can not only be controlled but also eradicated. He expressed these views while speaking as a guest speaker in the meeting held under the chairmanship of Chaudhry Altaf Shahid, president of Rotary Club Midtown Multan. Most of the problem is breast cancer and blood cancer. The reason for the increase of this disease is the lack of awareness among people. We take care of our needs at home but neglect our health.

Awareness is very important. Chaudhry Altaf Shahid, president of the Rotary Club of Midtown, said at the meeting that the increase in the number of cancer patients in South Punjab is a momentary concern. It is believed that they should play their role in the prevention of cancer because women can play a better role due to being the majority in the society. Then the disease can be controlled. Secretary Club Hina Babar, Muhammad Moazzam, Chaudhry Shehbaz Chatta, Salim Nasir, Ehtishamul Haque, Muhammad Umar, Shahid Saeed, Faheem Sattar, Professor Azam Hussain, Kashif Khalil, Amjad Malik, Waqas were present in the meeting. Hafeez, Rao Asif Akhlaq, Major R. Musrat Baig, Tariq Sarwar, Ayesha Ghazi, Farah Rehman, Sana Khan, Dr. Ayesha Abdullah and others participated.

A well-known orthopedic surgeon from the UK free examination and treatment to more than 90 patients



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: A Free Orthopedic Camp was organized at Lakhmat Anwar Nazir Hospital in which Dr. Shahid Ayub, a well-known orthopedic surgeon from the UK, offered free examination and treatment to more than 90 patients. The camp was inaugurated by Chief Executive Khayaban Manzoor Saifur Rahman Hashmi on this occasion, Chairman Hospital Management Committee Dr. Shafiqat Javed, Vice Chair Person Madam Maimona Rohi, Finance Director Anjum Iqbal Butt, Secretary Dr. Abdul Jabbar Abbasi, renowned Orthopedic Surgeon Dr. Shahid Ayub, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal and Dr. Muhammad Rafiq Medical Superintendent were also present. Speaking on the occasion, the guests appreciated the selfless services of Al-Khidmat Foundation for the suffering humanity in the field of health. Considered a blessing. It should be remembered that Al-Khidmat Anwar Nazir Hospital is providing quality health facilities in the Nawa area of Faisalabad and is also providing free treatment to deserving patients through free campuses.

Traffic chief seeks end of road encroachments in Faisalabad



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Traffic flow should be further improved by eliminating road encroachments across the city. Every traffic circle and sector should be ideal. These views were expressed by Chief Traffic Officer Maqsood Ahmed Lone while presiding over a meeting held regarding the elimination of traffic encroachments at traffic headquarters. DSP Traffic Headquarters Khalid Aleem, DSP Traffic City Saad Saud Saifdar Wahla, DSP Civil Line Muhammad Nawaz Kamuka, DSP Traffic People's Colony Malik Javed and sector in-charges were present on this occasion. The Chief Traffic Officer further said that in this regard, action should be taken by staying in constant contact with the concerned department. According to the mission of Additional IG Traffic Punjab Mirza Faran Baig and City Police Officer DIG Kamran Adil, efforts are being made for the best traffic flow on the roads. The CTO also requested the citizens to make adherence to traffic rules their motto.

Two drugs peddlers sentenced by courts in Attock

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Two drug peddlers were sentenced to different terms by different courts in Attock on Saturday, Police spokesman said. In the first case, Farkhanda Arshad special court for the Control of Narcotic Substances (CNS) in Attock sentenced to nine years' imprisonment besides imposing fine over a drugs peddler identified as Hunar Muhammad—who was arrested by Police red handed while selling hashish in Sheenbagh area 2023 by Attock Saddar Police. A case was registered against the suspect under section 9-C CNSA, 1997. In the light of the statements of the witnesses, the convict pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 9 years of imprisonment besides imposing a fine of Rs 80 thousands over him. Moreover, a special court for the Control of Narcotic Substances (CNS) in Attock sentenced to 9 years' imprisonment besides imposing fine over a drugs peddler who was arrested by Police with drugs at his den in the limits of Rangoo Police in December 2023. The convict Shehryar Ali Khan- a native of Formuli arrested under section 9-C CNSA, 1997 after recovery of hashish from his possession. The judge of the special CNS court Nadeem Abbas Saqi pronounced the judgment after recording statements of witnesses and final arguments from both sides. In the light of the statements of the witnesses, the convict pleaded guilty and was sentenced to nine years of imprisonment besides imposing a fine of Rs 80 thousand over him.

Entire leadership of PTI is patriotic and loves Pakistan Army: Qazi Ahmad

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Imran Khan has said that the entire leadership of PTI is patriotic and loves Pakistan Army, those who chant Pakistan Army Zindabad are the real Pakistanis. Chairman Imran Khan and his workers were, are and always will be patriots, MPA Qazi Ahmad Akbar's statement of submitting bills by selling straw on the assembly floor is being presented out of context, all Despite sufferings and atrocities, he did not lose heart and did not write anything against anyone, he expressed these views in a crowded press conference. in response to various questions, Imran Khan said that Qazi Ahmed Akbar left no stone unturned in the service of the people, that is the reason why the people of PP-1 Constituency voted for him in the election.

Israeli Brutality

Smoke rises from an Israeli airstrike in Rafah, southern Gaza Strip on May 31, 2024. Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed at least 36,284 people in Gaza, mostly civilians.



Photo: AP

Israel pounds Gaza after Biden outlines ceasefire plan

AFP

RAFAH, PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES: Israeli forces hammered Rafah in southern Gaza with tanks and artillery Saturday, hours after US President Joe Biden said Israel was offering a new roadmap toward a full ceasefire.

Shortly after Biden's announcement, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insisted his country would still pursue the war until it had reached all its aims, including the destruction of Hamas.

Netanyahu on Saturday insisted on Hamas's destruction as part of an Israeli plan presented by US President Joe Biden to end the Gaza war.

"Israel's conditions for ending the war have not changed: the destruction of Hamas's military and governing capabilities, the freeing of all hostages and ensuring that Gaza no longer poses a threat to Israel," the Israeli leader said in a statement.

"Under the proposal, Israel will continue to insist these conditions are met before a permanent ceasefire is put in place.

"The notion that Israel will agree to a permanent ceasefire before these conditions are fulfilled is a non-starter," Netanyahu added.

Israel's opposition leader on Saturday urged Netanyahu to heed US President Joe Biden's call for a Gaza truce

under which Hamas would free hostages, and offered to support the government should far-right coalition partners bolt.

"The government of Israel cannot ignore President Biden's consequential speech. There is a deal on the table and it should be made," Yair Lapid said in an X post.

"I remind Netanyahu that he has a safety net from us for a hostage-release deal if (Itamar) Ben-Gvir and (Bezalel) Smotrich leave the government."

The Palestinian militant group, meanwhile, said it "considers positively" the plan laid out by Biden.

In his first major address outlining a possible end to the conflict, the US president said

Israel's three-stage offer would begin with a six-week phase that would see Israeli forces withdraw from all populated areas of Gaza.

It would also see the "release of a number of hostages, including women, the elderly, the wounded, in exchange for (the) release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners."

Israel and the Palestinians would then negotiate during those six weeks for a lasting ceasefire — but the truce would continue while the talks remained underway, Biden said.

The US leader urged Hamas to accept the Israeli offer. "It's time for this war to end, for the day after to begin," he said,

in comments echoed by British Foreign Secretary David Cameron.

Hamas in a statement on Friday evening said it "considers positively" Biden's speech regarding "a permanent ceasefire, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, reconstruction and the exchange of prisoners."

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called his counterparts from Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye on Friday to press the deal.

UN chief Antonio Guterres "strongly hopes" the latest development "will lead to an agreement by the parties for lasting peace," his spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

Deputy PM commends IG Islamabad for rescuing wife of Vietnamese ambassador

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Saturday held a telephonic conversation with Inspector General (IG) of Islamabad Police, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, to congratulate him and his team for their prompt efforts in rescuing the wife of the Vietnamese ambassador.

The IG and his team utilized modern technology to swiftly resolve the issue, ensuring the safe recovery of the diplomat's spouse, Ishaq Dar said. Appreciating the efficient handling of the situation, he directed the IG to



continue providing swift solutions to any future diplomatic concerns.

Afghan consul agrees over joint efforts to solve problems faced in Pak-Afghan mutual trade



Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Consul General of the Afghan Consulate Peshawar, Hafiz Mohibullah Shakir has agreed to make joint efforts to solve the problems faced in Pak-Afghan mutual and transit trade to remove the obstacles.

The agreement by the Afghan envoy came during a meeting held at the Afghan Consulate with businessmen dealing in Pak-Afghan

trade, said a press release issued here on Saturday.

Coordinator Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, former senior vice president of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Engineer Manzoor Elahi, Director Transport Afghan Consulate Syed Muhammad Faiz, Former Deputy Commercial Attache, Dr Hameed Fazil Khel and Protocol Officer Shahidullah Zaheer were also present on the occasion.

President of Frontier Customs Agents Association (FCAA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Zia-ul-Haq Shardi spoke on the occasion and apprised participants of the meeting about different issues faced by the business community, traders, industrialists, exporters, transporters including restoration of Afghan document Ilam-o-Khabar, establishment of liaison committee between the two countries and gave various suggestions.

Planning Minister visits Chengdu High Tech Development Zone

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal visited Chengdu city in Sichuan, China and had a comprehensive tour of the Chengdu High Tech Development Zone (CDHT).

According to press release issued by Planning Commission here Saturday, the minister also met with Chengdu based entrepreneurs, and businessmen, interested in becoming part of Phase-II of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and members of the Pakistani diaspora.

During Minister's tour of CDHT, he was briefed by Chengdu Municipal leaders, and zonal officials, on the High Tech Development Zone's history, development profile, special policies to attract



both domestic and foreign investment, and pillar industries.

The CDHT, established in 1988, is one of the first national high-tech zones

in China. In 2023, the CDHT realized a zonal GDP of over US\$ 43 billion. Covering an area of 237 sqkm, the zone includes a financial district, biotechnology city, and a science and technology park, employing more than 750,000 people, and registering over 4300 enterprises.

The minister thanked the local officials for their briefing and invited them to participate in Pakistan's development, especially vis-à-vis CPEC Phase-II, and to develop technology parks in Pakistan, sharing their valuable experiences and expertise.

The minister also invited relevant experts to visit Pakistan, and engage with authorities and businesses, so that meaningful cooperation could take place. This was greeted positively by both the Municipal leaders and zonal officials.

Minister Salik emphasises devotion, effective communication for Hajj welfare staff

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain on Saturday urged the Hajj welfare staff (Moavineen-e-Hujjaj) to perform their responsibilities with devotion as serving the pilgrims is a sacred duty.

He said this on the occasion of orientation sessions held by the Hajj mission for supporting staff in Makkah to make them aware of assisting pilgrims during the Hajj days.

Emphasising the need for effective communication, the minister suggested that guides fluent in various Pakistani languages should be deployed to assist pilgrims visiting the Haram Sharif for Umrah or prayers. "This move would enhance the experience of pilgrims and help them navigate the area with comfort, given Pakistan's multicultural nature with language diversity," he added. He urged the supporting staff to ensure that the pilgrims should be provided with the best possible facilities and services during their stay for Hajj, showing compassion and empathy towards them in addition to their duties.

Controlling inflation, provision of employment opportunities govt's top priorities: Masadik Malik

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Petroleum Division Dr Masadik Masood Malik on Saturday said that controlling inflation and providing employment opportunities to the people were the government's top priorities. Addressing a press conference here, he said on the directives of the prime minister, maximum relief was being ensured to the masses and inflation witnessed a gradually decrease in the country. The premier has given targets to all the ministers to serve the people and reduce their burden by controlling inflation and creating job opportunities for them, he said.

He said factors like floods and natural calamities besides



Russian-Ukrainian and Middle East conflicts caused an increase commodity cycle. However, owing to the efforts of the incumbent government and targets given by the Prime Minister, the ratio of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has decreased from 37 per cent to 17 per cent, he said. Similarly, the food inflation has also reduced from 40 per cent to 11.5 per cent adding that we were going towards stability. Prices of petroleum products have also been slashed and around Rs

25-26 per litre relief on petrol was given to the people in one month, he added. He expressed the hope that inflation would further witness a down trend in the days ahead. Tractors' purchases have also registered a 50 per cent increase while urea production recorded a 17 per cent jump in the last one year, he added. The minister said the government would give a balanced and relief-oriented budget with an increase in 30 per cent increase in tax collection. The country's exports also witnessed an increase while imports have decreased, he said. He said more incentives would be given to small business and IT sectors in the budget. To a question, he said the PML-N government set up power plants to generate electricity at affordable rates.

Parliament determined...

Continued from Page 1

making CPNE a proactive organisation, dedicated to protecting and ensuring the provision of basic rights

to reporters and journalists.

While acknowledging the role of print media, he said that "Parliament and media are dovetailed to further the cause of democracy".

KP governor appreciates people...

Continued from Page 1

the fascinating scene of love and devotion of the people showing their love to motherland, dedication to the guards of the country's borders.

He said our people's vision is exemplary who always salute the courage and bravery of the security forces, Faisal Karim Kundi said that our country is our identity, adding may Allah almighty keep its glory, honor and dignity forever.

NEPRA determines...

Continued from Page 1

August, he said in a statement issued here Saturday by the ministry.

The minister said that Rs 4.65 per unit quarterly adjustment would be collected in June which would reduce to 93 paise in billing

months of July and August. He said the regulator had approved Rs 2.75 per unit adjustment for 2nd quarter which was being recovered in billing months of April, May and June. He said NEPRA determined quarterly tariff for DISCOs which was recovered in next three months.